DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 135 974 CE 009 804

TITLE	Report on Veterans' Responses to VA Educational Assistance Programs. A Report of the General Accounting Office Submitted to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs United States Senate. 94th Congress, 2nd Session. Senate Committee Print No. 5C.
INSTITUTION	Congress of the U.S., Washington, D.C. Senate Committee on Veteran's Affairs.
PUB DATE	11 Aug 76
NOTE	41p.; Not available in hard copy due to small print in document
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Comparative Analysis; *Dropouts; Federal Legislation; *Graduates; Higher Education; *Individual Development; Job Training; *Program Effectiveness; Questionnaires; Secondary Education; *Veterans; *Veterans Education; Vocational Education; Wages

ABSTRACT

From a sample of 15,000 veterans, 6,141 responded to a series of questionnaires developed to gather information to assess the effectiveness of the veterans' education program (authorized by the Veterans' Readjustment Benefits Act of 1966). Responses indicated that generally, a veteran entered training for one of three reasons--to earn a degree, certificate, license, etc., to learn a new skill to obtain a better job, or to improve skills related to his/her current job. While percentages differ significantly depending on the type of training taken, overall, about 40% of the respondents having terminated their GI bill training said they did not achieve their primary training objective. Veterans who took apprentice, other on the job, and graduate level college training said they achieved their objective most often. Correspondence, vocational/technical, and high school trainees indicated that they achieved their objective least often. While the strength of the relationship varies depending on the type of training, statistical techniques used to analyze veterans' responses indicated for all types of training that there was a definite relationship between the veteran's status as a completer or noncompleter and whether he/she achieved his/her primary goal. Other results are presented for the areas of employment after training, earnings after training, usefulness of training, counseling, and tutorial assistance. The appendix contains an example of one of the questionnaires used in the study. (SH)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED135974

94th Congress
2d Session } SENATE COMMITTEE PRINT NO. 50

REPORT ON VETERANS' RESPONSES TO VA EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

A REPORT

OF THE

GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

SUBMITTED TO THE

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

VANCE HARTKE, *Chairman*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

AUGUST 11, 1976

Printed for the use of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
75-598 O WASHINGTON : 1976

CE 009804

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

VANCE HARTKE, Indiana, *Chairman*

HERMAN E. TALMADGE, Georgia
JENNINGS RANDOLPH, West Virginia
ALAN CRANSTON, California
RICHARD (DICK) STONE, Florida
JOHN A. DURKIN, New Hampshire
CLIFFORD P. HANSEN, Wyoming
STROM THURMOND, South Carolina
ROBERT T. STAFFORD, Vermont

FRANK J. BRIZZI, *Staff Director*
GUY H. MCMICHAEL III, *General Counsel*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READJUSTMENT, EDUCATION, AND EMPLOYMENT

VANCE HARTKE, Indiana, *Chairman*

HERMAN E. TALMADGE, Georgia
ALAN CRANSTON, California
JOHN A. DURKIN, New Hampshire
ROBERT T. STAFFORD, Vermont
STROM THURMOND, South Carolina

COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-114859 August 11, 1976

The Honorable Vance Hartke
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States Senate

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In your July 2, 1976, letter you requested a report, without conclusions and recommendations, on veterans' responses to our questionnaires on the operation and effect of educational assistance programs provided under 38 U.S.C. 1651 et seq. Our report, including an example of one of our questionnaires, is enclosed.

As agreed with your office, copies of the report are being sent to the Administrator of Veterans Affairs, other congressional committees, Members of Congress, and other interested parties.

Sincerely yours,

Comptroller General
of the United States

Enclosure

HRD-76-158

(III)

VETERANS' RESPONSES TO GAO QUESTIONNAIRES ON THE OPERATION AND EFFECT OF VA EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS UNDER 38 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.

The purposes of the veterans' education program, authorized by the Veterans' Readjustment Benefits Act of 1966 (38 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.), are to (1) enhance and make more attractive service in the Armed Forces of the United States, (2) extend the benefits of a higher education to qualified and deserving young persons who might not otherwise be able to afford it, (3) provide vocational readjustment and restoration of lost educational opportunities to servicemen and women whose careers were interrupted or impeded because of active duty in the military services after January 31, 1955, and (4) aid servicemen and women in attaining the vocational and educational status which they normally might have obtained had they not served their country.

Since the program's inception, almost 6 million veterans and servicemen have received educational assistance payments exceeding $15 billion. The Veterans Administration (VA) forecasted that during fiscal year 1976 over 3 million veterans would train under the program at an estimated cost of $5 billion. This would bring the 10 year total of educational assistance payments to $20 billion.

Because of the magnitude of the program, and in an effort to develop information to assess the effectiveness of the program, in May to July 1974, we sent a series of questionnaires to 15,000 veterans and servicemen who have taken training under the 10 types of educational programs. The information in this report represents the most significant information reported by the 6,141 veterans who responded to our questionnaires.

IMPACT OF THE GI BILL

In an attempt to determine whether availability of GI bill benefits was a major factor in a veteran's decision to enter training, we asked each veteran surveyed the following question: "If the GI Bill had not been available to you, would you still have entered training?" While responses differed significantly depending on the type of training taken, overall, less than half (46 percent) of the respondents said they would have entered training without GI bill benefits. (See table 1.)

The majority of apprentice, other onjob, graduate school, high school, and nondegree college trainees would have entered training without benefits. By contrast, less than half, and in some cases less than one-third of the undergraduate, vocational/technical, flight, correspondence, and farm cooperative students indicated that they would have entered training in the absence of these benefits.

Table 2 shows the impact of the GI bill on decision to enter training by year of enrollment.

Table 1

Impact of the GI Bill on Decision To Enter Training

Type of training taken	Would have entered training without benefits	
	Yes	No
Apprentice	84%	16%
Other onjob	78	22
Graduate	61	39
High school	58	42
Nondegree	57	43
Undergraduate	47	53
Vocational/technical	37	63
Flight	30	70
Correspondence	27	73
Farm cooperative	17	83
All respondents	46	54

Table 2

Impact of the GI Bill on Decision To Enter Training by Year of Enrollment

Year	Would have entered training without benefits	
	Yes	No
1967	56%	44%
1968	53	47
1969	62	38
1970	53	47

Table 2 (cont'd)

Year	Would have entered training without benefits: Yes	No
1971	49	51
1972	44	56
1973	44	56

Note: Table does not include any data for farm cooperative training.

EXPENSES OF GOING TO COLLEGE

GI bill benefits are designed to offset a portion of the expenses incurred by veterans attending approved programs of education. A primary purpose of our review was to try to develop an estimate of these expenses and of the portion thereof offset by GI bill benefits. We asked each veteran surveyed to provide information on the amount of monthly VA benefits; the cost of tuition, books, and fees; and other expenses for his or her most recent enrollment period.

Table 3 shows average annual tuition (tuition, books, fees, and equipment), other expenses (meals, lodging, and transportation), and the average GI bill payment reported by veterans who were pursuing college level training on a full-time basis at the time they completed our questionnaire. The table also shows the extent to which tuition and expenses are offset by the average VA benefits received.

Table 4 shows the reported tuition costs and other expenses updated to reflect 1975-76 school year costs. Table 4 also reflects the 22.7-percent increase in veterans benefits which took effect in late 1974.

Tuition costs were updated using information provided by the Education Division of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Other expenses were updated based on changes in the Consumer Price Index between May 1974 and May 1976.

Table 3

Average Annual Tuition

Costs and Other Expenses

	Graduate level		Undergraduate level		
	Public	Private	Junior college	Public	Private
Expenses:					
Tuition	$ 773	$2,146	$ 356	$ 670	$1,704
Other expenses	2,780	2,869	1,412	2,058	2,177
Total	$3,553	$5,015	$1,768	$2,728	$3,881
Average GI bill benefits:					
1 month	$ 261	$ 243	$ 266	$ 239	$ 238
Estimated 9 months	$2,349	$2,187	$2,394	$2,351	$2,142
Percent of tuition offset by benefits	100	100	100	100	100
Benefits in excess of tuition:					
Amount	$1,576	$ 41	$2,038	$1,681	$ 438
As percent of other expenses	57	1.4	144	82	20
Percent of total expenses offset by benefits	66	44	135	86	55

Table 4

Average Annual Tuition Costs And Other Expenses (Updated)

	Graduate level		Undergraduate level		
	Public	Private	Junior college	Public	Private
Expenses:					
Tuition	$ 812	$2,461	$ 403	$ 725	$1,929
Other expenses	3,233	3,336	1,642	2,393	2,532
Total	$4,045	$5,797	$2,045	$3,118	$4,461
Average GI bill benefits:					
1 month	$ 320	$ 278	$ 307	$ 327	$ 292
9 months	2,880	2,682	2,943	2,637	2,619
Percent of tuition offset by benefits	100	100	100	100	100
Benefits in excess of tuition:					
Amount	$2,068	$ 221	$2,540	$1,912	$ 690
As percent of other expenses	64	7	155	80	27
Percent of total expenses offset by benefits	71	46	144	85	59

75-598 O - 76 - 2

COMPLETION RATES

Since the program's inception, through June 1974, almost 5 million veterans or servicemen had trained under the program. To develop information on the number of veterans who completed training, we asked each veteran surveyed his current training status--intraining, completed, or discontinued.

As shown in table 5, many veterans who entered the longer types of training (e.g., apprentice and undergraduate) or who entered training shortly before our survey (May through September 1974) were still in training when they completed our questionnaire. Therefore, completion rates cited in table 6 are for those veterans who entered in the early years of the program.

Table 5

Veteran Training Status by Calendar Year of Original Enrollment

Type and status of training	Calendar year of original enrollment							
	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
Apprentice:								
Completed	(a)	89.7%	91.7%	88.7%	63.5%	31.3%	10.8%	10.0%
Discontinued	(a)	10.3	8.3	8.5	8.1	18.1	16.1	15.0
Still enrolled	(a)	-	-	2.8	28.4	50.6	73.1	75.0
Other onjob:								
Completed	(a)	75.0	83.3	78.6	73.1	61.3	58.4	20.3
Discontinued	(a)	-	16.7	14.3	20.9	24.7	20.8	23.4
Still enrolled	(a)	25.0	-	7.1	6.0	14.0	20.8	56.3
Vocational/ technical:								
Completed	68.4%	48.0	58.7	83.1	59.6	59.2	57.1	34.8
Discontinued	31.6	52.0	38.1	15.5	37.6	38.1	28.1	24.7
Still enrolled	-	-	3.2	1.4	2.8	4.7	14.6	40.5
Correspondence:								
Completed	30.0	50.0	36.7	47.7	42.5	51.7	45.5	33.0
Discontinued	70.0	50.0	53.1	43.2	46.0	32.2	19.6	14.6
Still enrolled	-	-	10.2	9.1	11.5	16.1	34.9	52.4
Flight:								
Completed	(a)	44.4	47.6	55.9	38.5	48.7	48.2	46.7
Discontinued	(a)	44.4	47.6	38.2	30.8	30.8	25.0	28.9
Still enrolled	(a)	11.1	4.8	5.9	30.8	20.5	26.8	24.4
Nondegree:								
Completed	50.0	66.7	64.3	76.1	73.1	62.5	47.8	32.1
Discontinued	50.0	33.3	35.7	19.1	19.2	25.0	22.2	22.6
Still enrolled	-	-	-	4.8	7.7	12.5	30.0	45.3
Undergraduate— full time:								
Completed	69.2	60.9	72.1	55.9	38.8	28.5	19.8	8.1
Discontinued	19.2	26.1	18.6	17.2	16.5	14.6	13.7	13.0
Still enrolled	11.5	13.0	9.3	26.9	44.7	56.9	66.5	78.9
Undergraduate— part time								
Completed	42.2	45.4	14.6	14.5	11.8	6.6	8.8	5.1
Discontinued	26.9	27.3	36.6	29.0	17.6	23.6	18.6	28.8
Still enrolled	26.9	27.3	48.8	56.5	70.6	69.8	72.6	66.1
Graduate—full time								
Completed	80.0	80.0	86.7	47.1	60.0	42.6	25.0	12.5
Discontinued	20.0	-	13.3	17.6	12.0	7.4	11.1	12.5
Still enrolled	-	20.0	-	35.3	28.0	50.0	63.9	75.0
Graduate—part time:								
Completed	41.2	33.3	50.0	70.6	38.1	32.5	21.7	17.4
Discontinued	23.5	8.3	25.0	-	23.8	20.0	15.6	13.0
Still enrolled	35.3	58.3	25.0	29.4	38.1	47.5	62.5	69.6
High school:								
Completed	100.0	33.3	62.5	63.6	49.0	50.0	44.4	44.2
Discontinued	-	66.7	37.5	36.4	50.0	31.8	23.8	20.9
Still enrolled	-	-	-	-	10.9	18.2	31.8	34.9

a/Training not authorized under GI bill until August 31, 1967.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 6

Completion Rates (note a)

Type of training	For entrants during calendar years	Percent of entrants that completed	Percent of entrants that completed or discontinued
Apprentice	1967 to 1969	89.7	98.5
Other onjob	1967 to 1971	69.7	90.4
Vocational/ technical	1966 to 1972	60.3	93.4
Correspon- dence	1966 to 1970	42.5	91.1
Undergraduate (full time)	1966 to 1969	62.2	81.1
Undergraduate (part time)	-	(b)	-
Graduate (full time)	1966 to 1969	70.2	82.9
Graduate (part time)	-	(b)	-
Nondegree	1966 to 1971	67.6	93.5
Flight	1967 to 1969	51.6	93.8
Farm cooperative	-	(c)	-
High school	1966 to 1971	50.8	90.7

a/The completion rates cited in this report represent transitory rates of completion which had been attained at a given point in time rather than ultimate completion rates. If any veterans enrolled have since completed training, the completion rate would have improved accordingly.

b/No estimate can be made because the sample size is inadequate.

c/No estimate can be made because the data is not available by year of original enrollment.

VETERANS' ACHIEVEMENT OF THEIR PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

Responses indicated that generally, a veteran enters training for one of three primary reasons: (1) to earn a degree, certificate, license, etc., (2) to learn a new skill to obtain a better job, or (3) to improve skills related to his/her current job. To get an indication of the effectiveness of the program, we asked each veteran who had terminated training whether he or she had attained their objective.

While percentages differ significantly depending on the type of training taken, overall, about 40 percent of the respondents having terminated their GI bill training said they did not achieve their primary training objective.

Veterans who took apprentice, other onjob, and graduate level college training said they achieved their objective most often (i.e., 84.8 percent, 76.9 percent, and 75.6 percent, respectively). Correspondence, vocational/technical, and high school trainees indicated that they achieved their objective least often (i.e., 50.8 percent, 49.2 percent, and 45.3 percent, respectively).

While the strength of the relationship varies depending on the type of training, statistical techniques used to analyze veterans' responses indicated for all types of training that there was a definite relationship between the veteran's status as a completer or noncompleter and whether he or she achieved their primary objective. The majority of the completers said that they achieved their primary objective and the majority of the noncompleters said they did not.

Status as a completer or noncompleter was a particularly strong indicator of success in achieving the primary objective for those veterans who had enrolled in graduate, undergraduate, and flight training.

Veterans' status was less of an indicator of achievement if the veteran took nondegree, other onjob, apprentice, or farm cooperative training. This was not because completers were failing to achieve objectives any less often than those completing undergraduate, graduate, or flight training, but because a high percentage of dropouts were also achieving their objective.

Conversely, completion rate was less of an indicator of achievement for veterans who took vocational/technical, correspondence, or high school training because a high percentage of completers were failing to achieve.

Table 7

Achievement of Primary Objectives By Completers and Dropouts

Type of training	Overall		Completers		Dropouts	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Apprentice	84.8%	15.2%	94.4%	5.6%	40.0%	60.0%
Other onjob	76.9	23.1	91.0	9.0	38.9	61.1
Graduate	75.6	24.4	94.3	5.7	18.8	81.3
Farm cooperative	72.6	27.4	87.8	12.2	46.3	53.7
Nondegree	70.1	29.9	87.1	12.9	32.3	67.7
Flight	56.4	43.6	84.2	15.8	19.8	80.2
Undergraduate	55.8	44.2	86.6	13.4	13.0	87.0
Correspondence	50.8	49.2	72.2	27.8	18.8	81.2
Vocational/ technical	49.2	50.8	69.2	30.8	15.3	84.7
High school	45.3	54.7	67.1	32.9	12.7	87.3

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

EMPLOYMENT AFTER TRAINING

In an attempt to determine whether veterans who had terminated training under the program were employed and the extent to which their job related to their training, we asked apprentice, other onjob, undergraduate, graduate, vocational/technical, correspondence, nondegree, and farm cooperative trainees the following question:

"How does your present job relate to the training received? (CHECK ONE)

--DOES NOT APPLY - I am not working.
--I am currently employed in the type of work for which I was trained.
--My job is not related to my training, but I am making substantial use of the skills I learned during my NON-DEGREE training.
--My job does not relate to the training I received."

To flight trainees we asked the following question:

"Are you making use of your VA-assisted flight training in your current job?

--DOES NOT APPLY - I am not working.
--No.
--Yes (explain)."

No question of this nature was asked to high school trainees because we did not consider high school training vocationally oriented.

Most of the veterans who said they had terminated their GI bill financed training also said they were employed (see table 8); however, only two-thirds indicated that they were employed in the type of jobs for which they were trained or in jobs where they were making considerable use of the skills learned in training. Apprentice, farm cooperative, and graduate level college trainees used the skills most often (i.e., 88.4 percent, 71.7 percent, and 84.6 percent, respectively, were employed in jobs related to their training). Veterans who took vocational/technical, correspondence, and flight training said that they used the skills least (i.e., 53.9 percent, 44.1 percent, and 40.7 percent, respectively, were employed in training related jobs).

Indications are that veterans who completed training were employed in jobs related to their training significantly more often than veterans who did not complete. More than 90 percent of all respondents who completed apprenticeship, other onjob, and farm cooperative training said that they were employed in jobs related to their training. By contrast, less than 65 percent of the veterans who completed vocational/technical, correspondence, and flight training were employed in training related occupations.

Table 8

Relationship of Veterans' Employment To GI Bill Training Received

Type of training	Overall				Completers				Dropouts			
	Same type	Substantial use	Not related	Not working	Same type	Substantial use	Not related	Not working	Same type	Substantial use	Not related	Not working
Apprentice	80.0%	8.4%	8.8%	2.8%	89.2%	5.6%	2.6%	2.6%	40.7%	30.4%	25.2%	3.7%
Other onjob	69.1	9.9	16.1	4.8	86.0	5.4	5.8	2.7	24.0	21.9	43.8	10.4
Graduate	62.5	22.1	9.1	6.3	68.6	19.4	5.8	6.3	47.5	30.6	19.4	6.5
Undergraduate	31.1	28.0	31.3	8.8	43.6	30.0	17.6	8.8	20.2	27.4	47.5	8.9
Nondegree	56.3	17.8	21.3	4.6	65.7	16.1	15.3	2.9	35.0	21.7	35.0	8.3
Vocational/ technical	32.1	21.8	35.1	10.9	42.8	21.2	27.5	8.4	13.2	22.9	48.6	15.3
Correspondence	20.1	24.8	48.7	7.2	23.4	29.7	40.6	6.3	15.1	15.6	68.6	8.7
Flight	40.7	-	54.5	4.8	56.2	-	38.1	5.7	21.4	-	75.0	3.6
Farm cooperative	63.9	20.8	10.6	4.7	73.6	18.2	5.8	3.1	47.9	25.8	19.8	7.3

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

EARNINGS AFTER TRAINING

Veterans who terminated farm cooperative training reported the highest after training annual income--$17,704. However, because this figure may represent gross farming receipts before deducting farming expenses, it may not be comparable to annual incomes reported by other veterans. After farm cooperative, flight and graduate level college trainees reported the highest annual incomes of $16,438 and $15,607, respectively. The two lowest annual incomes were reported by vocational/technical and high school trainees with $9,834 and $8,224, respectively.

Table 9

Annual Gross Incomes Reported By Veterans Who Have Terminated Training (note a)

Type of training	Annual gross income
Farm cooperative	$17,704
Flight	16,438
Graduate	15,607
Nondegree	13,671
Apprentice	12,555
Undergraduate	11,068
Correspondence	11,025
Other onjob	10,509
Vocational/technical	9,834
High school	8,224

a/Based on data reported by veterans working full time--at least 35 hours per week.

Average incomes of completers vs noncompleters

In most cases, veterans who completed training reported higher annual incomes than veterans who failed to complete.

75-598 O - 76 - 3

Table 10

Average Annual Incomes of Completers and Noncompleters of the Various Types of Training (note a)

Type of training	Average incomes of Completers	Noncompleters	Percent completers' incomes exceeds noncompleters' incomes
Graduate	$16,116	$13,998	15.1
Nondegree	14,600	11,247	29.8
Apprentice	13,210	9,605	37.6
Undergraduate	11,211	10,901	2.8
Correspondence	11,404	10,462	9.0
Other onjob	10,751	9,726	10.5
High school	8,538	7,655	11.5
Vocational/ technical	10,168	9,212	10.4
Flight	16,447	16,429	NIL
Farm cooperative	17,671	17,762	NIL

a/Based on data reported by veterans working full time--at least 35 hours per week.

Average income of those in related vs nonrelated employment

Table 11 shows that, in most instances, the reported average annual incomes of veterans in training related jobs were substantially higher than those in nontraining related jobs.

Table 11

Comparison of Average Annual Incomes of Veterans in Training Related Jobs With Those of Veterans in Nontraining Related Jobs (note a)

Type of training	Veterans' average annual incomes (note b) Training related jobs	Nontraining related jobs	Percent training related incomes exceed nontraining related incomes
Graduate	$15,849	$13,986	33.1
Correspondence	11,740	10,394	12.9
Apprentice	13,852	9,888	41.4
Other onjob	10,779	8,937	20.6
Vocational/ technical	10,187	9,392	7.6
Undergraduate	11,716	9,730	20.4
Nondegree	14,756	9,615	53.5
Flight	17,798	15,424	15.3
Farm cooperative	18,705	10,481	78.8

a/No information available for high school trainees.

b/Based on data reported by veterans working full time--at least 35 hours per week.

USEFULNESS OF TRAINING

To get an indication of the effectiveness of training taken under the program, we asked each veteran surveyed to rate the usefulness of training received with regard to his or her training objective or career plan.

While responses differed significantly depending on the type of training taken, overall, 20 percent of the respondents said that the training they took under the GI bill was of little or no use with regard to their training objective or career plan.

Again, as can be seen in table 12, there is a definite relationship between the veteran's status as a completer or noncompleter and how he or she rated the usefulness of the training.

Generally, less than 10 percent of the completers rated the training they received as being of little or no use. It is noteworthy then, that over 16 percent of the vocational/technical and over 20 percent of the correspondence completers said their training was of little or no use.

Table 17

Usefulness of Training As Indicated by Completers and Noncompleters

Type of training	Overall				Completers				Noncompleters			
	Extremely useful	Moderately useful	Little use	No use	Extremely useful	Moderately useful	Little use	No use	Extremely useful	Moderately useful	Little use	No use
Apprentice	57.3%	33.3%	4.2%	5.2%	63.5%	32.6%	3.0%	0.9%	30.9%	36.4%	9.1%	23.6%
Other onjob	35.4	28.7	9.3	6.7	64.5	25.2	6.9	3.4	30.9	38.1	15.5	15.5
Graduate	64.5	30.5	4.2	0.8	75.0	23.0	1.5	0.5	33.3	53.0	12.1	1.5
Farm cooperative	37.8	50.8	8.3	3.9	41.3	52.3	5.2	1.2	32.1	46.2	13.3	8.5
Nondegree	54.6	29.8	9.8	5.8	67.1	26.4	4.3	2.1	27.7	36.9	21.5	13.8
Flight	48.7	30.8	15.2	5.3	59.7	31.0	7.8	2.3	33.7	30.5	26.3	9.5
Vocational/ technical	38.5	35.0	15.8	10.7	47.1	36.2	12.2	4.5	23.8	33.1	21.9	21.2
Undergraduate	46.5	36.9	11.2	5.4	68.3	31.8	6.8	3.1	28.0	43.6	17.1	11.3
Correspondence	28.1	40.5	17.7	13.7	30.7	49.2	10.8	9.3	21.3	27.5	28.8	20.2
High school	44.5	33.6	13.8	8.9	56.8	31.8	8.8	3.4	25.5	36.2	30.7	17.2

COUNSELING

The counseling service provided through VA includes educational, vocational, and rehabilitation counseling and is designed to help those who are counseled make the best use of their educational and training benefits by helping them (1) arrive at sound decisions about their educational and vocational goals and (2) plan programs of education or training that will enable them to attain these goals. To this end, VA offers counseling services by professionally qualified counseling psychologists at approximately 70 VA locations and at approximately 170 college, university, community, and private counseling centers under contract with VA.

Since the inception of the current GI bill through June 1974, about 227,450 veterans have been counseled. This represents about 4.6f percent of the 4,895,000 veterans who have trained under the program. Responses to our questionnaires indicated that one of the main reasons for the low counseling activity was that many veterans were not aware that VA offers counseling services. Of the 5,491 veterans responding, 2,244, or about 41 percent, said they were not aware that VA offered counseling services. Of the 2,244 veterans, 1,549, or about 70 percent, said they would have requested VA guidance if they had been aware of it.

Following are questions we asked on VA counseling and veterans' responses thereto.

"Did you request and receive any counseling, advice, or information from VA prior to enrolling in this training?"

Responses (note a)		Number	Percent
Yes.	I was tested or counseled by VA about my aptitudes or training plans.	233	4.2
Yes.	I received information or advice about my training and benefits from VA.	1,167	21.3
No.	I requested but did not receive any guidance from VA.	133	2.4
No.	I was aware of but did not request VA guidance.	1,714	31.2

Responses (cont'd)	Number	Percent
No. I was not aware that VA guidance was available.	2,244	40.9
Total	5,491	100.0

"Would you have requested VA guidance if you had been aware of it?" (Asked only those giving the last response above.)

Responses (note a)	Number	Percent
Yes	1,549	69.0
No	560	25.0
No response	135	6.0
Total	2,244	100.0

a/Does not include responses from graduate students.

TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE

VA reports show that since the inception of VA's tutorial assistance program, through June 30, 1975, 80,609 veterans had received tutorial assistance payments from VA totaling approximately $8 million.

We asked each veteran who entered graduate or undergraduate level college training on a half-time or more basis after July 1970, several questions regarding his or her awareness of and participation in the tutorial assistance program. Of those responding, 65 percent said they were not aware of the program. Of those not aware of the program, 38 percent indicated that they have had academic difficulty and would have requested tutorial assistance aid if they had been aware that it was available.

Following are questions we asked on VA tutorial assistance and summaries of veterans' answers thereto.

"Were you aware that the VA has a program under which a veteran student can receive additional money to hire a tutor to assist him with a required course(s) in which he is having difficulty?"

Response	Overall	By training type: Graduate	Undergraduate
Yes	35%	26%	38%
No	65	74	62

"Would you have requested VA tutorial assistance if you had been aware of it?" (Asked to those who responded no to the above question.)

Response	Overall	By training type: Graduate	Undergraduate
Yes	38%	24%	43%
No	55	71	49
No response	7	5	8

SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

Sample selection

We sent questionnaires to 15,000 veterans selected at random from VA's data processing center master education files located at Hines, Illinois. These files contained both active (currently receiving educational benefits) and inactive (no longer receiving educational benefits) veterans who participated in various education and training programs under the current GI bill (38 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.).

Participation data available from the VA education file (March to April 1973) indicated there were 3.6 million veterans who had taken some form of training.

Sample size

The following is a list of VA's 10 major educational programs, showing the total number of questionnaires mailed, the responses received, the nondeliverable questionnaires, and response rates by type of training.

Type of training	Questionnaires mailed	Responses received	Nondeliverable	Response rate Overall	Response rate Adjusted
Graduate level college	1,040	485	301	48.5%	69.4%
Undergraduate level college	3,000	1,481	700	49.4	64.5
Nondegree college	1,000	279	307	28.9	41.7
Vocational/technical	3,000	1,033	889	34.4	48.9
Apprenticeship	1,000	456	225	45.6	58.8
OWJOB	1,000	445	189	46.0	56.7
High school	1,000	394	414	39.4	54.8
Flight training	1,000	312	282	31.2	43.5
Farm cooperative	1,000	651	30	65.7	67.1
Correspondence	2,000	788	594	39.4	54.7
Total	15,000	6,141	3,933	40.9	55.5

Of the 15,000 questionnaires mailed to veterans, we received 6,141 replies, or a 40.9-percent response rate. Allowing for nondeliverable questionnaires, the adjusted rate of response was approximately 56 percent.

Appendix I contains an example of one of the questionnaires used during this review.

IMPORTANT!

Official Government Business

UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
REGIONAL OFFICE
[illegible] U.S. CUSTOMHOUSE, 610 SOUTH CANAL STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607

Dear Veteran:

The General Accounting Office is reviewing VA programs for educational assistance under the G.I. Bill to see whether they can be improved to better help you and your fellow veterans and servicemen. We are concerned with the assistance given to you by the VA to help you in job training and education. We want to learn whether the training and education you receive helps you to readjust to civilian life and whether you receive your payments promptly.

We are asking you, and a number of other veterans and servicemen, to help us in reviewing the programs by completing this questionnaire. Your answers are important because you were selected to be a representative for thousands of other veterans and servicemen. The time and care that you devote in completing the questionnaire will contribute to improving the training and education you and your fellow veterans and servicemen receive under the G.I. Bill.

The General Accounting Office is an agency of the legislative branch of the Federal Government, reporting directly to the Congress. We are not connected in any way with the VA and information you give us will not be used in connection with your VA records and will be handled with utmost care.

A self-addressed envelope that requires no postage is attached for your convenience to return the completed questionnaire. If you need more space to answer the questions or to supply additional information, feel free to use the back page of the questionnaire.

Please return the questionnaire within 10 days so that we can begin considering all the answers.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

G. F. Stromwall
Regional Manager

APPENDIX I APPENDIX I

NON-DEGREE COLLEGE TRAINING

QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: This questionnaire concerns only the NON-DEGREE COLLEGE TRAINING most recently received under the GI Bill. Please answer every question, unless instructed otherwise. After reading each question, indicate the answer which best describes your personal situation. If none of the suggested answers adequately describes your situation, please write in your answer. If the question itself does not apply to your situation, indicate this by marking the appropriate " DOES NOT APPLY" answer.

1. Please name the college, university or school at which you most recently received NON-DEGREE college training under the GI Bill:

_____

2. What type of institution is this? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Public college or university
B [ ] Private college or university
C [ ] Other (specify) _____

3. Please indicate your most recent major field of study at this institution. _____

4. Please give us the following information concerning your college curriculum:

4-1 Enrollment Period: (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Semester
B [ ] Quarter
C [ ] Trimester
D [ ] Term
E [ ] Year
F [ ] Other (specify)_____

4-2 Classload - Number of credit hours taken (most recent period) _____ credit hours

4-3 Training Time (most recent period): (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Full time
B [ ] Three-quarter time
C [ ] Half-time
D [ ] Less than half-time

4-4 What was your tuition cost (tuition, books, fees and equipment) for your most recent enrollment period? (disregarding any payments from VA) $_____ (per period)

4-5 Please give us your best estimate of all other educational expenses (meals, lodging, transportation, etc.), not included above, during your most recent enrollment period. (disregarding any payments from VA) $_____ (per period)

5. When did you begin this NON-DEGREE college training under the GI Bill? _____ _____ month year

6. What is your present NON-DEGREE college training status? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Currently in-training
B [ ] Currently between enrollment periods - (with definite intentions of re-entering during the next period)
C [ ] Successfully completed training
D [ ] Discontinued training

7. Prior to entering this NON-DEGREE college training, did you receive any encouragement, help or advice in deciding what course of study to pursue?

A [ ] Yes, from: (CHECK ONE OR MORE)

B [ ] The VA or VA counselors
C [ ] The school or its representatives
D [ ] Friends or relatives
E [ ] Other (specify) _____

F [ ] No help, advice or encouragement received

8. Did the training establishment inform you of any pre-enrollment educational or work experience requirements for this training, before you enrolled?

A [ ] Yes (please explain these requirements) _____

_____

B [ ] No

9. Were you required by the educational institution to take any tests or answer any questions about your previous training or work experience in this training field, prior to your enrollment?

A [ ] Yes, I was tested.
B [ ] Yes, I was questioned or interviewed.
C [ ] No

10. What was your primary reason for selecting this school? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Geographical location
B [ ] Reputation of the school
C [ ] Financial considerations
D [ ] Offered what I was interested in
E [ ] Only school available
F [ ] Recommended by others
G [ ] Other (specify) _____

_____

11. Was the field of study you identified in question 3 your first choice?

A [ ] Yes
B [ ] No, my first choice was: _____
and I didn't take my first choice because: (CHECK OR MORE)

C [ ] It wasn't available in my area.
D [ ] It was too expensive.
E [ ] It couldn't meet the entrance requirements.
F [ ] Training was offered at inconvenient times.
G [ ] Limited job opportunities in that field.

12. Did you request and receive any counseling, advice, or information from VA prior to entering the NON-DEGREE training? (CHECK ONE OR MORE)

A [ ] Yes, I was tested or counseled by VA about my aptitudes or training plans.
B [ ] Yes, I received information or advice about my training and benefits from VA.
C [ ] No, I requested help from VA but did not receive any.
D [ ] No, I was aware of, but did not request, VA guidance.
E [ ] No, I was not aware that VA guidance was available. (ANSWER BELOW)

--Would you have requested VA guidance if you had been aware of it?

F [ ] Yes
G [ ] No

13. If you received any guidance from VA prior to entering training, how useful was it to you? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I did not receive any guidance from VA.
B [ ] Extremely useful
C [ ] Moderately useful
D [ ] Of little use
E [ ] Of no use

14. Do you believe that VA should require that all veterans be tested or counseled about their training plans prior to their undertaking NON-DEGREE training?

A [ ] Yes
B [ ] No

15. Were you aware that the VA has a program under which a veteran student can receive additional money to hire a tutor to assist him with a required course(s) in which he is having difficulty?

A [ ] Yes
B [ ] No

16. Did you ever apply for and receive additional money from VA to provide for tutorial assistance in subject(s) in which you experienced academic difficulties? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I didn't have any academic difficulties.
B [ ] Yes, and I passed the subject(s).
C [ ] Yes, but I did not pass the subject(s).
D [ ] I applied for, but did not receive, VA tutorial assistance.
E [ ] No, I was aware of this assistance but did not apply for it.
F [ ] No, I was not aware that this assistance was available. (ANSWER BELOW)

--Would you have requested VA tutorial assistance if you had been aware of it?

G [ ] Yes
H [ ] No

17. What was your PRIMARY objective when you began this NON-DEGREE training? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] To earn a degree or diploma (specify) _____
B [ ] to earn a certificate or license (specify) _____
C [ ] To better my employment opportunities
D [ ] To qualify for a higher education (Doctorate, etc.)
E [ ] Other (specify) _____

18. Have you attained your primary objective?

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I am still in-training.
B [ ] Yes
C [ ] No

19. How would you rate the usefulness of your training with regard to your training objective or career plan? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Extremely useful
B [ ] Moderately useful
C [ ] Of little use
D [ ] Of no use

20. How did you receive your payments from VA for this training?

A [ ] Monthly checks - the approximate amount of my most recent check was: $_____

B [ ] Lump-sum payment - the approximate amount of my most recent check was: $ _____.

21. Please indicate the extent to which VA payments cover your total education expenses (including meals, lodging, transportation, etc.) (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] My VA payments approximately matched my educational expenses.

B [ ] My educational expenses exceeded my VA payments - (by about $_____ in my most recent enrollment period).

C [ ] My VA payments exceeded my educational expenses- (by about $_____ in my most recent enrollment period).

22. Have you experienced any of the following problems in connection with your VA educational assistance payments? (CHECK ONE OR MORE)

A [ ] Delays in receiving checks from VA.
B [ ] Incorrect amounts on VA checks.
C [ ] Failure to receive checks from VA.
D [ ] Other _____

_____

E [ ] No problems

23. If you did experience any of the problems cited in question 22, did they in any way affect your continuing or completing your training? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY, I did not experience any problems.
B [ ] Yes (please explain) _____

_____

C [ ] No

24. Have you received VA benefits for the entire period of your NON-DEGREE training?

A [ ] Yes
B [ ] No, I did not receive VA benefits for about _____ months of this training because: (CHECK ONE)

C [ ] I used up all my educational entitlement.
D [ ] I was not aware VA benefits were available at first.
E [ ] Other reason (specify) _____

_____

25. To remain in training, did you (or your spouse) have to work to supplement the assistance received from VA? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Yes, I worked full-time (35 or more hours per-week
B [ ] Yes, I worked part-time (less than 35 hours per week).
C [ ] Yes, my spouse worked full-time.
D [ ] Yes, my spouse worked part-time.
E [ ] Yes, both my spouse and I had to work to supplement the VA assistance payments.
F [ ] No, neither my spouse nor I had to work.

26. In addition to the VA assistance payments and any income from employment, did you receive any other non-VA assistance to help cover your education expenses? (CHECK ONE MORE)

A [ ] Yes, I received a _____ (grant, loan, scholarship, etc.) in the amount of $_____ per _____ (quarter, semester, year, etc.) from _____. (specify source)

B [ ] Yes, I received financial assistance totaling about $_____ from _____. (parents, other relatives, friends, etc.)

C [ ] No

27. Is there any aspect of your NON-DEGREE training about which you believe you were misinformed or misled?

A [ ] Yes, I believe I was misinformed or misled. (indicate by whom and explain)

B [ ] The school
C [ ] VA
D [ ] Others (specify) _____

_____

E [ ] Explain _____

_____

F [ ] No, I do not believe I was misformed or misled.

28. Please give your overall impression of the assistance that VA provided you before or during your NON-DEGREE training: (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Excellent
B [ ] Good
C [ ] Fair
D [ ] Poor

29. How would you rate the NON-DEGREE training you received under the GI Bill? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Excellent
B [ ] Good
C [ ] Fair
D [ ] Poor

30. If the G.I. Bill had not been available to you, would you still have entered this NON-DEGREE training?

A [ ] Yes
B [ ] No

31. What do you believe VA could do, or could have done, to better assist you? _____

_____

_____

_____

32. Please indicate the highest level of education you have attained at this time. (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] 8th grade or less
B [ ] Some High School - Did not gratuate
C [ ] Completed High School or G.E.D.
D [ ] Completed High School and afterwards completed additional job training (specify)_____
E [ ] Some College - But no degree
F [ ] Bachelor's Degree (specify major)_____
G [ ] Graduate work beyond Bachelor's Degree
H [ ] Professional degree, requiring at least 6 years of academic work (specify) _____
I [ ] Masters degree (specify major field)_____
J [ ] Doctorate Degree (specify major) _____

IF YOU ARE PRESENTLY IN TRAINING OR BETWEEN ENROLLMENT PERIODS--STOP HERE!

If you have COMPLETED or DISCONTINUED this training please answer the following questions.

33. What is the approximate date when you completed or discontinued your NON-DEGREE training? _____ _____
month year

34. Did you get a job upon completion or discontinuance of your NON-DEGREE training? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I was already employed.
B [ ] Yes, and it was related to my training
C [ ] Yes, but it was not related to my training.
D [ ] No, I did not get a job.

35. If you got a job after completion or discontinuance of your training, how long did it take you to get that job? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I was already employed.
B [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I did not get a job.
C [ ] I got the job within the first month.
D [ ] _____ months

36. Which of the following helped you the most in obtaining this job? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I was already employed.
B [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I did not get a job.
C [ ] No one, I applied directly to the employer.
D [ ] The School Placement Office
E [ ] VA
F [ ] Other (specify) _____

_____

35

37. What was the main reason you did not get a job upon completion or discontinuance of your Non-Degree training? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I was already employed.
B [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I did get a job.
C [ ] I never applied for a job.
D [ ] Employers wanted people with more experience.
E [ ] Employers wanted people with more education.
F [ ] There were no jobs available.
G [ ] Other (specify) _____

_____

38. Was there any follow-up by the school, VA, or others to determine whether you were successful in obtaining a job? (CHECK ONE OR MORE)

A [ ] Yes, follow-up by the school
B [ ] Yes, follow-up by VA
C [ ] Yes, follow-up by others (specify) _____

_____

D [ ] No follow-up

39. Do you believe that follow-up contact by the VA would have been of assistance to you upon completion or discontinuance of your NON-DEGREE training?

A [ ] Yes (explain) _____

_____

B [ ] No

40. Does the school you attended offer job placement services or assistance?

A [ ] Yes
B [ ] No

41. Have you made use of available placement services or assistance?

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - Placement services aren't available.
B [ ] Yes, I have used these services and I would rate them as: (CHECK ONE)
C [ ] Extremely useful
D [ ] Moderately useful
E [ ] Of little use
F [ ] Of no use

G [ ] No, I have not used these placement services.

42. Which of the following best describes your current employment status? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] Working full-time (35 hours or more per week)
B [ ] Working part-time (less than 35 hours per week)
C [ ] Not working

43. If you are currently working, please indicate your annual gross income from your current job: (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I am not working.
B [ ] My annual gross income is $_____ (best estimate)

44. How does your present job relate to the NON-DEGREE training you received? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I am not working.
B [ ] I am currently employed in the type of work for which I was trained.
C [ ] My job is not related to my training, but I am making substantial use of the skills I learned during my NON-DEGREE training.
D [ ] My job does not relate to the training I received.

45. Which of the following best describes why you are not working at this time? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I am working.
B [ ] I am in school or training.
C [ ] I am injured, sick or handicapped.
D [ ] The available jobs are not what I am looking for.
E [ ] The available jobs do not pay enough.
F [ ] There are no jobs available.
G [ ] I was laid-off temporarily but expect to return to work soon.
H [ ] I am not interested in working at this time.
I [ ] Other reasons (specify) _____

_____

46. If you had been informed of limited job opportunties for your field of study, prior to entering NON-DEGREE training, how would this knowledge have influenced your decision to enroll in this field of study? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] I would have enrolled in the same field of study.
B [ ] I would have enrolled in a different field of study.
C [ ] I would have considered a different type of training.
D [ ] I would not have enrolled in any education or training.

47. If you had been informed that pre-admission tests had shown a low aptitude or understanding for the type training you wanted, would you still have attempted to enroll in the same course of study?

A [ ] Yes, because _____

_____

B [ ] No

48. What was your primary reason for not completing your NON-DEGREE training? (CHECK ONE)

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I have completed my NON-DEGREE training.
B [ ] I could not devote enough time to my studies.
C [ ] The courses were too difficult.
D [ ] My VA benefits were exhausted.
E [ ] Financial problems - VA assistance payments did not cover expenses.
F [ ] Other financial problems.
G [ ] Other reasons (specify) _____

_____

49. If you have discontinued your training, do you intend to resume it in the near future?

A [ ] DOES NOT APPLY - I completed my training.
B [ ] Yes
C [ ] No, because _____

_____

APPENDIX I

APPENDIX I

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

CE 001 804